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DEFICIENCIES IN OUR HISTORY

AN

ADDRESS

DELIVERED BEFORE THE

VERMONT HISTORICAL

AND

ANTIQUARIAN SOCIETY,

AT MONTPELIER,

OCTOBER 16, 1846.

WITH AN APPENDIX CONTAINING THE CHARTER, CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS OF THE SOCIETY, THE VERMONT DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE, JANUARY 15TH, 1777, THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE CONVENTION, 4TH OF JUNE, 1777, AND THE "SONG OF THE VERMONTERS," IN 1779.

BY JAMES DAVIE BUTLER,

*Professor in Norwich University.*



MONTPELIER:

EASTMAN AND DANFORTH.

1846.

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## Deficiencies in our History



## NOTE

In issuing this reprint the original pamphlet has been followed and the list of names, p. 37-38, is given without change, though it contains many typographical errors. See *Vt. Governor and Council v. 1* note page 57.

The "Vermont Declaration of Independence" was published in the *Connecticut Courant*, No. 634, March 17, 1777 (see *v. 1 Vermont Governor & Council* p. 50 and note p. 57).

On page 34, in a note signed C. G. E. (Chas. G. Eastman), it is stated that "the following declaration and accompanying papers were found by Mr. Stevens at Washington." This seems to indicate that at the time this pamphlet was printed (1846) the original draft of the Vermont Declaration of Independence was extant.

The conventions of January and June, 1777, appointed committees to draft the declaration and other papers here set forth and directed that they should be printed in the newspapers, and they did in fact appear in the *Connecticut Courant* in 1777. In the fac-simile reprint of "Early Vermont Conventions, 1775-1777", so carefully edited by the Hon. Redfield Proctor in 1904, on page 14, the conclusion is reached that the Dr. Jonas Fay records are "the original and official record of the proceedings of these meetings or conventions." Is it not possible that among the papers referred to by Mr. Eastman as having been found by Mr. Stevens at Washington was the original draft of the Vermont Declaration of Independence made by the committees under order of the conventions and furnished to the *Connecticut Courant* for publication? This declaration is an important State document and if in existence should be secured and placed in the State archives, where the original records of the convention that adopted the Declaration are now deposited.

E. M. G.



# Deficiencies in our History

A Reprint









James D. Butler

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# ADDRESS.



*Fellow Citizens of Vermont:*

The life of old nations is memory. In the old world travellers daily behold great events and the *scenes* of them—not only commemorated by monuments, but canonized by chapels and altars.

*Young* nations live in *hope* rather than in memory. (While pressing forward to those things which are before, they forget those which are behind.) This truth finds many exemplifications in our history.

A circular was recently sent to every town in Vermont that was incorporated when our State independence was declared, requesting information concerning the 71 *signers* of that declaration. It was vouchsafed only *one* answer. Our declaration of State independence was never *published* in this State until last summer, and then only in fugitive *newspapers*. The papers of our first and most memorable *Governor* were sold to a pedlar with paper *rags*.

The *cannon* taken (in defence of our frontier) at Bennington lie unclaimed at Washington. The *maps*, captured at the same place, were used as *curtains* until all, save one, perished. The grenadiers' *arms* and drum there taken, and presented as a trophy to our State council were received with a promise that, according to the donor's request they should be kept in the council-chamber as a memorial to the glorious action fought at Wallumscoik. But this trophy has been vilely thrown away.

Properly speaking we have no *rostrum*. A rostrum is a speaker's stand begirt with memorials of vanquished foes. We have *none*.

Facts such as these prepare us to expect a universal apathy in regard to our history, and move our special wonder that we can boast so *many* historians, and several worthy of no common praise.

It is no great discredit to our historians that they are in many respects

deficient, since they were forced to make brick without straw, the collections needful for the adequate execution of their task, which are still imperfect, not having been fairly begun, when most of our chroniclers wrote.

It is simply because no one else could be found to stand in the gap, that I venture to appear before you at this time, inasmuch as I must appear to the same disadvantage with our historians. I have, indeed, had access to sources of knowledge which were hid from their eyes; but I have enjoyed this privilege only a few days, and under the double pressure of ministerial and professional labors, as well as with one foot on the *cradle*, in the judgment of many a much greater impediment.

The subject which I would invite you to consider, is certain deficiencies in our State histories.

The controversy of Vermont with New York has never been described as its merits, and the richness of materials regarding it, demand. I have drawn up a list—which, pardon me, I do not mean to read—of fifty questions concerning it which demand elucidation. No historian hints—what every historian should have clearly shown—that that struggle was not merely about the price of land, but a conflict between New England and New York *principles*—those of the Puritan and of the Patroon;—between our township system, with local elections and taxes, and New York centralization.

I am constrained to pass in utter silence, however, the manifold short-comings of our writers in respect to our relations to all our sister States.

The part Vermont took in the Revolution is rather shadowed forth than distinctly traced by our historians.

They claim for us indeed a share in the taking of Ticonderoga, as well as in the siege of St. Johns; in the battle near Bennington, and perhaps in the taking of Burgoyne.

But, though much is said of battles as far off as Braddock's defeat, instead of a distinctive account of Vermont's military career, her exploits are so blended with those of the continentals, or so imperfectly detailed, as to lose all individuality.

As to the capture of Ticonderoga, it is said, men from Connecticut came to Vermont to engage Ethan Allen in the business. It is not

hinted that Allen had ever before thought of such a project, even in his dreams. What is the fact? Allen's own testimony is, that when the men from Connecticut arrived in Bennington, he and other officers of the Green Mountain Boys were already deliberating upon a project for surprising that fortress; though whether such a measure would be agreeable to Congress or not, they could not for certain determine.

A full month before any step was taken in Connecticut, for seizing Ticonderoga, an agent, recently dispatched through Vermont to Montreal, thus wrote the committee of correspondence in Boston:

"March 29, 1775.

"One thing I must mention to be kept as a profound secret. The port of Ticonderoga must be seized as soon as possible, should hostilities be committed by the king's troops. The people of the New Hampshire Grants have engaged to do this business; and, in my opinion, they are the most proper persons for this job."

"This will effectually curb this province, and all the troops that may be sent here."

This last particular, the importance of Ticonderoga as the key alike of New England and Canada; the usefulness of the cannon there taken, at the siege of Boston and elsewhere; its having been thought worth sacrificing thousands of lives; its being surprised by men destitute of bayonets, of a *single* bayonet,—are particulars which one wonders our historians have not made more prominent, since all but one-sixth of those, who effected the surprise, were Green Mountain Boys, and this was the first offensive exploit in the war of our Independence.

The readiness of the Vermonters for the Revolution, even before hostilities began, is indubitable, but is not made manifest in our histories.

Among Slade's State papers, indeed, there is an assurance from the Vermonters given to New Hampshire and Massachusetts four weeks before the affray at Lexington, that "they shall always be ready for aid and assistance to those States, if, by the dispensations of Providence, they should be called thereto." I have found no allusion to this assurance in any history.

But the preparation of heart in Vermont for hostilities is attested by more particular evidence even than this. Seven weeks before the 19th of April, Ethan Allen wrote a leading man in Connecticut, promising

a regiment of Green Mountain Boys in case of war. This letter is still extant in manuscript.

More than half a year before the war of the Revolution began, a rumor that the British had slain six men, and seized a depot of powder, electrified New England. A chronicler of those times says: "The heads of the Bennington body, of 2000 armed men, forthwith gave out orders that they should get ready to march."

Allow me next a glance at the invasion of Canada. None of our later historians give due credit to the diplomatic address of our Fay and Ira Allen, which contributed to the capture of the British fleet. After the fall of Montgomery, General Wooster, who was sent for, to the command of the forces besieging Quebec, in despair of other assistance, wrote thus to Warner in Vermont: (2, 162:) "Let me beg of you to collect immediately as many men as you can, and somehow get into this country, and stay with us till we can have relief from the colonies. Let your men be sent on by tens, twenties, thirties, forties or fifties, as they can be collected." Within eleven days from the writing of this letter at Montreal, in the dead of winter, Green Mountain Boys were on their march for Quebec. In about two months the force of effective men before that city was almost doubled by reinforcements under Warner. But for this seasonable relief, the retreat from Canada might have been a rout, or our whole army there have been forced to capitulate, (or, to use a phrase very common soon after, might have been Burgoyned.)

Some of our histories mention the arrival of twenty-seven men from Massachusetts before Quebec. They are all silent respecting—what it much more behoved them to relate—ten times as many recruits from our own State. Nor do they, with one exception, so much as once mention the name of Warner in all their notices of the winter campaign in Canada.

In relation to Allen's attack on Montreal, our historians say that Brown was, by some means, prevented from co-operating with Allen as he had agreed to do. The question, by *what* means, still remains unanswered. The answer to it might show that the blame of Allen's finding captivity for himself, when he sought the capture of Montreal, is not to be charged solely to his own fool-hardiness.

Our State histories say nothing of the supplies forwarded from





Bennington to Ticonderoga, in 1776, at a time when, but for such assistance, that fortress might have been lost.

The next day, after receiving a call for flour, the Committee answered, that, without an hour's delay, they had sought for wheat, and found 1000 bushels; would send on what was ground forthwith, and the rest as soon as it could be manufactured. They add these words to the commander at Ticonderoga: "It is difficult to transport what we have already on hand; for our militia, even before we received your letter asking assistance, left us almost to a man, marched, and have doubtless joined you before this.

This relief was afforded at a crisis when the tories about Albany cut off all hopes of succor from that quarter, and when the troops at Ticonderoga had bread but for sixteen days, and were expecting to be blockaded.

Our historians say that on the evacuation of Ticonderoga, our Council of Safety resolved to raise all the troops they could to act against Burgoyne.

None of them, however, save Ira Allen, tell us how, with an empty treasury, they could raise an army, as it were, by a stamp of the foot. The secret of this miracle—a regiment made ready for war in a fortnight—was an expedient proposed by Ira Allen himself, (at sunrise, after a night spent in devising ways and means), namely: to confiscate instantly all the property of all tories, except such articles as humanity required for their families.

But even Allen fails to bring out fully the alacrity and energy of our fathers during this critical campaign. A man in Connecticut writes that agents of Vermont had to come thither to buy arms to the amount of £4000; and, failing to obtain them, had gone further—with what success is to this day unknown. The militia of this State were chiefly at Ticonderoga, yet Warner writes: "I should be glad if a few hills of corn unhoed should not be a motive sufficient to detain men at home". Such was the rally that St. Clair, a few days after, writes thus: "The Vermont Convention have given such proofs of their readiness to concur in any measure for the public safety that it would be impertinent to press them now.

Our historians would have made it plainer what part Vermont had in the taking of Burgoyne, if they had described more fully how

sacrificingly she removed or destroyed all crops, cattle, and carriages, that were in danger of being seized for his use, and thus *took off his chariot wheels*. They might have shown the revolution in Burgoyne's feelings effected by the battle of Bennington, and the part Vermont was thought by him to have played in that action, had they contrasted two of his letters, one written just before, the other just after that battle. Aug. 12 he writes to the commander of the expedition against Vermont: "Try the affections of the country—cross the mountains to Rockingham and Brattleboro—bring me 1300 horses or more." Did he know by instinct that this State was a nursery of good horses?

August 20, eight days afterwards, he writes: "The Hampshire grants in particular, a country unpeopled and almost unknown in the last war, now abounds in the most active and most rebellious race of the continent, and hangs like a gathering storm upon my left."

Truly he needed not send again to try the affections of such a country!

The exertions of Vermont against Burgoyne are liable to be underrated, because our histories pass in silence the false rumors which then extensively prevailed, and had all the effect of realities. Ticonderoga was evacuated by unanimous vote of a full council of war. It was reported by more than one that he could tell when that fortress was sold, and for how much. One hundred and twenty-eight cannon were there lost. This number was exaggerated to 300. No artillery men were there slain or captured. It was rumored that none of them escaped. The British built no fortifications in Castleton, nor were they there in great force. But the rumor was that 3000 and then 6000 of them were fortifying there, and that with cannon. They never, unless by scouts, penetrated further east than Castleton. Tidings crossed the mountain announcing, first, that they were at Rutland, then nine miles east of it on the road to No. 4, and still pushing on. Burgoyne never sent a detachment against any place north of Rockingham. Common fame declared his myrmidons on their march for Royalton and Newbury. Contemporaries speak of this rumor—driving families by scores, and cattle by hundreds, to flee across the Connecticut. No diversion in Burgoyne's favor was attempted at Boston: he had no intention to cross New England to Boston; but both these schemes were firmly believed by not a few.

Amid rumors such as these, and perhaps others more appalling, the memory of which may have perished, men's hearts failing them for looking after those things which were coming, the Green Mountain Boys heard a voice ringing in their ears—

"Leave the harvest to perish on the field where it grows,  
And the reaping of wheat for the reaping of foes:"

and they were deaf to all other voices.

In describing the operations at Lake George landing, by which the vessels, in which Burgoyne might have retreated, were captured, both Williams and Thompson leave Warner's name unmentioned. But Warner was the commander of that expedition, (3.729.) Those whose names *are* mentioned—Brown, Woodbridge and Johnson—were his subalterns.

Herrick, who was at the head of the Green Mountain Rangers in this expedition, is also passed in silence by our best historians, though he was honored with a special letter of thanks, not only from the Vermont council, but from General Gates at the head of the continental army.

Reading Williams' history in boyhood, I used to wonder what became of that thorn in our side—the British garrison in Ticonderoga—after Burgoyne's surrender. I have not found what I sought in any other historian. The fact is, that that garrison retreated into Canada; but not without forty-nine men of their rear, as well as horses, cattle, and boats, in great numbers, being taken by fifty Vermont Rangers. Forty-nine regulars taken by fifty militia. A fact like this is worth something to an advocate for the efficiency of militia.

Such were the exertions of Vermont, during this campaign, as to prevent the Council from getting the new-made constitution printed, (3. 841.) Other results of the campaign are thus stated by Gov. Chittenden:

"Though there were plentiful crops on the ground, the inhabitants were prevented from securing any considerable part of them. Before they left the service against Burgoyne, the season was so far advanced as to put it out of their power to make preparations for a crop of winter grain on which they had ever had the greatest dependence. The principal part of them, therefore, are reduced to an Indian cake,

in scant proportion to the number of their families. Their sheep and flax having been destroyed by the enemy, or having otherwise perished, their bellies and backs are become co-sufferers."

"In this deplorable situation they remain firm and unshaken; and, being generally well armed and accoutered, are ready in any emergency, and on the shortest notice, to face and encounter their inveterate foe—undaunted."

There is much history, of the domestic or defensive military preparations of Vermont, yet unprinted.

Fragmentary notices of forts are, indeed, scattered through our Gazetteer, under the words Hubbardton, Pittsford, Rutland, Castleton, Bethel, &c. But the system, of which they were a part, is not explained in our histories. There are manuscript records—of headquarters in Rutland, often garrisoned by hundreds,—of branch-forts with palisades or pickets, flankers and barracks for 150 men,—of scouts reconnoitering the woods, passing from fort to fort, seizing suspected persons, helping or forcing bold settlers to remove within the lines of defense,—destroying such crops as they could not secure from the enemy, and continuing their excursions even in winter on snowshoes.

In this service, it is recorded that one-sixth part of the able-bodied men (on an average, one from every family) were at times, employed. When special danger was apprehended, reinforcements were forwarded on horseback. Enlistments were encouraged by the bounty of a township of land for each company. Provisions were obtained by requiring each town to send on thirty pounds of pork with each recruit—by issuing press-warrants for horses and empty bags, and by causing the highway tax to be worked out as early as possible, to facilitate the transportation of supplies.

Pittsford was not, as has been supposed, always the most northern post. In March and April, 1778, a considerable force was posted in New Haven, (4. 73.) This may have been one of the new line of forts which Vermont was engaged in erecting when Congress withdrew all the national spades and pickaxes, and the enemy's vessels were cruising on the lake.

Particulars such as these are not the pomp and pride of war; but they are worthy to be known, though unrecorded by our historians.

Let us next remark certain deficiencies in our histories with regard to the tories—the worst foes of our fathers.

From the best histories of Vermont one would scarcely believe there was such a class of men, for their name is seldom mentioned—never by Thompson, with manifest reference to Vermont. Doubtless they were fewer than the British hoped when they struggled so perseveringly, by threats and promises, to make Vermont a crown-province—and than Governor Morris feared, when he thus wrote to Congress, (3. 319:) "Disagreeable as it may be to tell or to hear this truth, yet a truth it is, that very many of those villains—the Vermonters—only want a New England reason, or, if you like the expression better, a plausible pretext to desert the American States, New Vermont among the rest."

Yet, in a single act of the Legislature, there is a list of 108 tories from twenty-nine towns. Half the men in Strafford and Thetford fled to Burgoyne—others repaired to the British on their march to Bennington. The expenses of war and government were, in a great part defrayed by the avails of tory estates, though sold at a sacrifice by auction.

Records are not wanting of tories that were laid under bonds, or imprisonment, for concealing arms and ammunition,—for spying out the nakedness of the land and betraying it to the enemy; of some that were banished—of others overtaken and killed as they were fleeing. The most unique punishment to which they were subjected was decreed by the Council at Bennington, in January, 1778, after this fashion: "Let the overseer of the tories detach ten of them, with proper officers to take the charge, and march them in two distinct files, from this place, through the Green Mountains, for breaking a path through the snow. Let each man be provided with three days provisions. Let them march and tread the snow, in said road, of suitable width for a sleigh with a span of horses. Order them to return, marching in the same manner, with all convenient speed, (4. 32.) Let them march at six o'clock tomorrow morning,"—early rising.

The practice of confiscating the property of tories originated in Vermont, though it was imitated by most other States. In vain did the sufferers endeavor to take advantage of certain stipulations in their favor in the terms of Burgoyne's surrender. Our fathers decided that

none could be so benefitted but those who were at that time in his camp. Toryism snapped asunder the bands of society. It is said, "Trust ye not in any brother, for every brother may utterly supplant". It tended to make life here what it was in France during the Reign of Terror—the infinite conjugation of the verb *suspect*. How many were wrongfully suspected! How many were filled with revengefulness!

Our histories can never do justice to those to whom we owe our independence, till they tell us, as they have not yet done, how unflinching they braved intestine war—personal, as well as public enmity.

Our histories relate few Indian depredations during the Revolution. The burning of, now and then, a single house—the capture of a few prisoners, usually two or three at a time, and the destruction of Royalton—are the substance of their accounts. There was little more to relate.

But much more was to be expected and *was* expected. The Indians had desolated so many towns in New Hampshire and Massachusetts, and three times attacked the first settlement in Vermont, though in the extreme south of the State,—why should they not fall with redoubled fury and frequency upon those who were more in their neighborhood, and had even ventured as near them as New Haven and Newbury? They were stimulated to attack our frontiers by Johnson's and Carlton's intrigues, and appeals to their hopes and their fears. They were enticed to the same enterprise by the arts of fugitive tories, burning for revenge and plunder—eager to show them the way to slaughter. Doubtless our possession of Ticonderoga, at first, and afterwards the cutting of Hazen's road, tended to curb their ravages; but other circumstances, though they have eluded the research of our historians, contributed, perhaps, even in a greater degree, to the safety of our frontiers. I will glance at one or two. As we have already seen, our preparations for defence were more efficient than represented in histories.

At the outset of the Revolution Ethan Allen dispatched messengers to win over the Indians—at least, to neutrality. At the same time he sent them a characteristic letter in this style:

"I know how to shoot and ambush like Indians. My foes stand all along close together, rank and file. My men and your men shall eat and drink together, and fight together against those who first began to kill us. If you wish to remain in peace, you need not fight. But come

and see us. I will give you whatever you want—bread, knives, tomahawks, paint, belts, blankets, money, rum."

Thus and by other means, many Indians were induced to come to Newbury throughout the war, some to settle in that region—many to get presents—many to trade, and some to enter our service as scouts and spies.

Some of the Indian chiefs who come to Newbury were sent to Washington's army, and there treated with marked attention, as well to gain intelligence from them, as to convince them of our power and good will. Other chiefs furnished with a list of questions for which they were to procure answers, were sent as spies into Canada, and the intelligence thus procured was highly valued by Gates, Schuyler and Washington. On the whole, Indian incursions may not have done us more harm, than the information they furnished, as to the disposition of the Canadians, the forts, forces, reinforcements, supplies, measures and projects of the enemy did us good.

Though a hundred letters are extant concerning our relations to the Indians at this time, I must content myself with one extract from one written by General Bailey at Newbury, many years after the close of the war :

"I could not with safety leave the frontier where I was settled and join the army. I thought I could be of more service to our cause by securing an extensive frontier from the depredations of the Canada Indians, which by making friendship with them I effected, for at least 200 miles."

"My exertions were such that I was watched and waylaid night and day, by the enemy from Canada—my house rifled, papers destroyed, son carried captive, and maltreated, only because he was my son, and would not discover to them how his father obtained intelligence of their movements. To the close of the war I was employed by Washington to keep friendship with the Indians, and gain intelligence of the enemy in Canada."

It has lately transpired that President Wheelock interceded in our behalf, with his former pupil, Brandt, the Indian chief, and that not without success. Moreover, proof is not wanting that the British Colonel Johnson was taken prisoner by John Warner, but released on condition of the Indians being restrained from Vermont. But our

frontier settlements, however safe, were by no means secure,—rather out of danger than free from apprehensions. One of our historians narrates a panic in Windham County ;—he might have spoken of another in Windsor County, when the inhabitants along White River fled, many of them by night, lighted by brands of fire, down the river to Lebanon ; and of another in Orange County, (4. 107.) when, says an eye witness, families are this moment rushing into Newbury, and for sixty miles they are upon a doubt whether to remove or not.

Women yet live who can testify of such days when they lived in fear of the fate of Miss McRea, the bride of Ft. Edward, that Gertrude of Wyoming in real life,—when every rustle of a shaken leaf seemed an Indian tread ; every tree an Indian covert—every window a mark for his rifle, every hamlet fully assured that it was singled out, above all others, as the victim of the savage.

The relation sustained by our fathers to Indians and Tories, as well as their defensive measures having been slightly noticed, and their conflicts against the British so blended with those of the Continentals, by our historians,—it is not too much to say that the part Vermont took in the military exploits of the Revolution is *yet to be written*.

I cannot speak as I would of the negotiations with the British in Canada, which turned the last two years of the war into diplomatic intrigues, but I must not pass them unnoticed.

The right of Vermont to adopt policy for power, when Massachusetts and New Hampshire were plotting a Poland-like partition of her territory,—when every continental soldier turned his back upon her,—when New York had no voice save to cry *confiscation*,—when an army as large as Burgoyne's was concentrating against her alone, can scarcely be doubted. But for such a course, the fate of Royalton would have been that of all her towns.

Vermont would have yielded to Britain sooner than to New York. Some have hence taken occasion to say that Vermont was inclined to yield to Britain, as if because one evil is greater than another the less evil is a good,—as if because Andre preferred being shot to being hung we should infer that he wished to be shot.

Our historians have not failed to refute this slander. They have also related how the negotiations with Canada drove Congress to



acknowledge the Independence of Vermont, and how they kept an army as large as Burgoyne's inactive. It might have been added, that a few soft words rendered repeated invasions, full of sound and fury, though carried as far as Burgoyne's, so fruitless, as to resemble oceans into tempests rocked to waft a feather, or to fulfil an old saying in a new sense—

"The King of France with forty thousand men,  
Marched up a hill and then—marched down again."

The venerable Chipman, in the life of his yet more venerable brother, has broken a lance not without a wound, though in his old age, against the assailants of our leaders in their graves. From his reasoning it seems clear, that the Vermont diplomatists never, in all the armistice, professed loyalty to the crown, never lifted a finger to reconcile any man to it, and that nothing has been proved against them which is inconsistent with their avowed objects, namely, to keep the British army inactive, and to prevail upon Congress to vote the admission of Vermont into the Union as a 14th State. This sort of negative defence of the Green Mountain Chiefs is enough for their acquittal. Another may be made of a more positive character by means of documents to which our historians do not seem to have had access.

Years before, charges of toryism were brought against Vermont by those who were not authorized to cast the first stone, and whose principal reason for thinking her tory was that they had done so much to make her so.

Our truce with Canada was rather a help than a hindrance to the last great struggle of the war—the operations against Cornwallis. It was either unknown to Washington or understood by him to be a political manœuvre. In the midst of the armistice he wrote to Stark, commander in the northern department: "I doubt not that your requisitions to call forth the force of the Green Mountains will be attended with success." Requisitions, remember, to defend New York, their bitterest foe. Stark's reply was, that his requisitions *were* attended with success,—that upon a sudden alarm five hundred and fifty mounted men from Vermont joined his troops in a few hours. Near the beginning of the armistice Schuyler had written to Washington: "It is believed, that large offers have been made the Hampshire Grants, but that nothing will induce the bulk of them to desert the common cause."

Washington was privy to the secret policy of Vermont for some time,—probably more than a month—before the surrender of Cornwallis. This fact, stated but by one of our historians, seems to have been discredited by all the rest. It is established by a letter, long given up for lost, (but recently discovered,) and so alluded to by our historians as to excite suspicions that they had never seen it. Washington, therefore, does not appear to have been perplexed by a British officer's apology for killing a Vermonter in a skirmish—an apology which enraged Gen. Stark and filled Vermont itself from side to side, with a tempest of indignation.

The only evil suggested by Washington as resulting from our diplomatic intercourse with the British was encouraging them to overrate the proportion of tories among us. But what was this encouragement to that they would have taken from the conquest of Vermont, which, but for being amused with hopes, they would have accomplished? The one was *shadow* the other *substance*. The height of their expectation was not greater than the depth of their disappointment.

The only remaining charge seems to be that our cabinet acted with bad faith toward the British. But, as the British were the chief sufferers by our policy, they would have been first to cry treason had there been any treason. They seem to have viewed themselves as worsted by their own weapon, diplomatic finesse. The falsehoods told them were not palpable, and will be judged tenderly by those who hold stratagems are lawful in war, and that it cannot be wrong to deceive him whom it is right to kill. The Governor of Canada, not discouraged by failures, continued this pen and ink warfare, more years than Troy was besieged, and even sent to Burlington an envoy, who is plausibly supposed to have been his late Majesty, George the Fourth.

Was it not then worth while for our leaders to make themselves of no reputation for a time, that without drawing a sword, without thwarting the plans of Washington, without injustice even to our enemies, they might avert the extremest peril? Luther's words were half battles, theirs were more.

In all our histories there is a lack of characteristic minutiae. We ask for face-to-face details, we receive far off generalities "where every something being blent together turns to a wild of nothing."

Seemingly trifling particulars catch our eyes as we gaze at a

landscape; they affect the eye-witnesses of events—they bring the light of other days around us as we listen to the narrative of old age;—they are the sparkling fountains—abstractions are the vapid stream.

Some writers may have neglected such fragments, deeming it beneath the dignity of history to stoop and gather them, as if history, like the Pope was never to be seen except gorgeous with trailing robes, or were to represent nations, as some picture books represent kings wearing crowns and holding sceptres—even in bed. So far as the suppression of picture-like details has been a sin of ignorance, it is to be winked at, but not if it has proceeded from scorning them as nothing worth. Which of our historians might not profitably copy the following account of the evacuation of Ticonderoga, albeit it fell from the lips of a negro:—

"About 11 o'clock on Saturday night, orders were given by our Colonel to parade. We immediately obeyed. He then ordered our tents struck and carried to the battery. On doing this, the orders were to take up our packs and march, which we also did, passed the General's house on fire, marched 20 miles without a halt, and then had a brush with the enemy."

How shall history hold the mirror up to nature if not by giving us the very words of the actors in bye gone times? Things cannot indeed be all described, then the world would not contain the books which would be written, but those parts, the least as well as the greatest, should be sought out, which most nearly produce the effect of the whole.

If the ballad writer be as influential as the legislator, why should our historians with one consent, refuse us, even in their notes and appendices, a single specimen of the popular songs, the Marsailles hymns, —indicted by Rowley and others—sung at the crisis of our destiny.

Can we learn as much in regard to common schools at an early day from any of our histories, as from a single remark made to me by a woman, who had no thought of telling any great thing, that in the winter of 1780, her brother kept a school in one of the *two* rooms in his fathers log house in Sharon, there being then twenty-eight families in town and that there was no school for five winters afterwards! Only *two* of the sixty-eight settlers in Bennington made their mark; *all* of the 1006 petitioners to King George wrote their names, and Elkins, a boy from Peacham, when a prisoner in England, receiving

a shilling a week from Dr. Franklin, paid out *four* coppers of it for tuition.

Do not facts like these throw light upon the popular intelligence and desire of knowledge?

What incident in our histories shows the inspiring effect of the Bennington battle so strikingly as a trifle they all omit,—a rumor which straightway ran through New Hampshire, that Burgoyne himself was taken at Stillwater,—coming events cast their shadows before.

I would not willingly be ignorant that in 1764 there were only about 100 families between the mountains and the river—that a post-boat from Canada was taken soon after the seizure of Ticonderoga—that an express could be sent from Newbury to Boston in three days, cannon from Lake George to the same place in seventeen days—that the Vermont Uniform was green with red facings—that rum even when it rose to \$96, continental money, a gallon, was dealt out in the rations,—that Allen gave Warner 400 acres of land for cutting off the ear of a Yorker—that each Vermonter after the Bennington battle received \$5 plunder money. Each of these trifles is a little window through which we can look into the distant past.

The little said in our histories in relation to religion, tends to disprove the assertion of Dr. Dwight, that "our first settlers were chiefly universalists and infidels." There is much to disprove it in the following details. Orthodox ministers were early settled in most towns; sermons longer than we can bear, and as searching were preached at the opening of every State Convention and Assembly;—requests for prayers abound in letters,—pamphlets then printed have beyond all comparison more allusions to the bible than to all other books together. When one would put General Bailey on his guard against tory liers-in-wait, he dropped in his path a paper with these words on it, "The Philistines be upon thee Samson."

The word of God was the law-book for all cases falling under no statute, and sentences were given according to its enactments. Where there was no church or preacher, meetings were held under trees and in private houses: such an assemblage delayed one day the burning of Royalton. My grand mother used to tell me that during the battle of Bennington, she and many others were met for prayer within the sound of cannon.

Our writers have not enough availed themselves of vivid particulars by way of indirect description.

What can give us a better idea what a long struggle was expected when hostilities begun, or how our people rushed to the war, than these words, written one week after the bloodshed at Lexington from that quarter to this. "For heaven's sake, pay the closest attention to sowing and planting; do as much of it as possible, not for your own families merely. Do not think of coming down country to fight." What can draw and color more to the life the want of all things useful in war, during Burgoyne's invasion than these words of Stark, written at his quarters on the Connecticut:

"I am informed that the enemy have left Castleton and have an intent to march to Bennington. We are detained here a good deal for bullet moulds, as there is but one pair in town, and the few balls sent on by the State go but a little way in supplying the whole."

One pair of bullet moulds! a light visible result significant of how many things not so visible.

Such incidents, like the rude strokes in charcoal-sketches, produce more effect than many elaborate line engravings.

The impressiveness of our history is weakened because a thousand petty circumstances are scattered here and there through a *Gazetteer* or through voluminous documents sometimes in widely sundered archives, like the elementary constituents of Mosaic work instead of being fitly framed together into a life-like picture, as those of the French Revolution have been by Carlyle.

The heroic deeds of our forefathers seem not to have been appreciated; sometimes they are mentioned as things of course, or unmentioned by our writers, though they are not a whit behind the chiefest deeds man can boast.

Luther when the Pope burned his books, burned the Pope's bull. In what did he surpass Allen's retorting the setting a price on his head by New York, with setting the price on the head of a New York dignitary?

At Bennington, a Green Mountain Boy struck a Hessian officer's sword from his hand with a stick, and forced him to make his file of men lay down their arms. How few know that hero's name!

We shall always remember two men that swam the Hellespont,—

the one from vanity, the other for personal gratification of another sort. We are in danger of forgetting a citizen of our own who swam as broad a strait at Ticonderoga, at midnight, threading his way through a hostile fleet, not for himself but for his country,—Richard Wallace—worthy to bear the name of him of Scotland, and to be equalled with him in renown.

I have sometimes thought our writers particularly oblivious of female heroism as displayed in our history.

A French maid of honor who lost her arm by foolishly thrusting it in place of a door-bar to protect her queen, is eulogized. A woman of Vermont suffered the same loss, defending her husband, with the first weapon that offered against midnight kidnappers, and is passed over in silence.

French women are praised for digging and trundling barrows to rear a monument of national fickleness. The similar labors of Vermont women striving to take the places of their husbands who were dying in battle are more than half forgotten.

It is recorded in Scottish history that Knox's daughter would rather see him beheaded and catch her head in her apron, than have him turn papist. It is not recorded in our history what Vermont mother used her apron to staunch the blood of her wounded son, when both of them still every moment were exposed to be scalped.

None of our histories mention the name of Hannah Handy, whose entreaties rescued not only her own children but seven of her neighbor's children from going into captivity, after they had been already taken over White River, and who dared to cross that river on the back of an Indian, that she might bring back her jewels. Yet was she a heroine before finding a parallel for whom we shall search long.

But as anecdotes of Allen were eagerly coveted in his life time by distinguished Frenchmen, as we are learning that our curled maple and walnut may compare with mahogany, and that our marbles may vie with those of Carrara, which some have crossed an ocean to visit, so let us believe that heroes and heroines may not always be without honor in their own country, and in ours. Such seem specimens of the cardinal deficiencies in our histories as to our part in our histories of the Revolution, including our conflicts and our negotiations with the British, as to minute details, and as to our heroes and heroines.

These deficiencies, and countless others in relation to topics on which I have no time to touch, have not only been clearly detected by our President, but his labors have accumulated materials for supplying very many of them. He has gathered together fragments from lake to river, from Massachusetts to Canada,—he has spent three months together in the collections of sister states, or of the general government; he has secured correspondents in Canada, and in the person of his son, he has broken through the Chinese wall of English exclusiveness,—he has found laws and journals of the Legislature that have been given up for lost—he has doubled Thompson's list of Vermont books before its admission to the Union,—he has saved letters by thousands that were ready to perish, and that cast each its ray on the dark past. He has recently added a third to the ponderous tomes obtained of him by the State two years ago,—he has collected autographs, not to see which with more pleasure than Napoleon's would cast onimous conjecture on your patriotism, written in such a hand as was to be expected from pioneers, but who would look on letters of gold with half the pleasure?

Are all desiderata then supplied by the collections of our President? By no means. Properly speaking he has had to do with only one department—military operations—and that during the Revolution. We ought to be thankful that he has magnified his office, yet not forgetful that he has exhausted none of the mines of investigation. A barrel full of papers left by the most interesting military character in our annals lies headed up and unexamined to this day.

The collections of other societies and public offices, whether state, national or foreign, remain to be examined or re-examined. The papers of every man mentioned in our history are to be sought for, and in this search the name of every such man may prove a guide useful as a clue in a labyrinth. We must seek for sermons, histories, and biographies, hoards of newspapers, or those thrown away like autumnal leaves, journals in manuscript, letters sent out of the State to those from whom the settlers came forth. A rich mine of these is doubtless still unopened, for, among hundreds I have examined, I have discovered only two addressed to women, and none—no not one—written by a woman. But were not woman in those days ready writers even as now? Proverbially the best letter-writers in all other countries, were they found wanting here? Did not their letters paint the lights and

shades of life in this new State, as they have since portrayed western clearings, as those of busy men, less keen-eyed for the picturesque and trivial could not, or did not ?

Other sources of historical facts will also be opened to us by lucky accidents, too various to be described or too strange to be predicted. The gems of sister societies were sometimes found where least looked for. The original of the world-famed (English) Magna Charta was found in the hands of a tailor, who was just ready to cut it up for patterns. One of the most ancient and valuable maps of New Hampshire, when it extended to the lake, was discovered in a storehouse where a pedler had left it when he removed his rags, either through accident, or judging it not worth taking away.

What has been will be.

If such a list of questions as that prepared by the Massachusetts society were circulated throughout Vermont, township by township, beyond a doubt many early laws and journals of the Legislature, long ago given up as irrecoverably lost, as well as much equally valuable and more curious information concerning Town Committees and Committees of Safety, those cradles of our independence, lacking links of every sort in the chains of our annals, might be rescued from oblivion.

No doubt the drag-net of our research will gather of every kind. Criticism must therefore have its perfect work, in separating the precious from the vile. The mass of materials must also be classified according to their nature, the time to which they relate, the place where they were found, or the purposes for which they may be employed.

Many explanatory notes must be appended to the collections made by our President, or what is a plain path to him will appear to those who shall come after, "a mighty maze and all without a plan."

The fruits of our historical harvests and gleanings ought also to be garnered up in a chief place of concourse, instead of the corner where they are now secluded,—even as the treasures of other states are honored with archives in Boston, Hartford, Concord, New York and Washington.

How beautiful thus to have a section of the past brought safe into the present and set down before your eyes !

Arrangements are making for publishing the earliest annals of our fathers. I trust such a publication will soon take away our reproach of



being the only State which has had a Society for a series of years and yet published nothing, as if our investigations were labor lost, or were to be hidden in the chaos of a Museum.

The " Historical readings," published in the State Banner, were well received. Let us have more of them, a hundred fold. Let our printers whose types preserve knowledge, bring forth things old as well as new.

What is of more interest than a town history—to each man that of his own town? No where in Europe did I seek without finding one. How long shall we desire such histories in vain? What true patriot loves not his own village?

Who can doubt the capacity of our primitive period to furnish an anthology of incidents suited for a reading book in common schools! Such a book would have a greater charm for children than things far off and long ago. It might develop a spirit of research which must otherwise perish in embryo. Many an unique document which now appears to them as worthless as the jewel seemed to the barn-yard fowl, it might lead them to appreciate so that they would say, destroy it not, for a blessing is it.

The only incident relating to our history, I remember in my school books, is Howe's captivity, and that was in a book long since antiquated. Is there nothing, then, in our history such that we may fitly tell in the ears of our sons, and teach it diligently to our sons' sons!

As a means of securing the ends now suggested we may rejoice that we have a State Society, albeit as some think, it has but a name to live. Should we dispise its low estate, knowing that all beginnings are small? Will it not be a rallying point, nay a magnet attracting to itself and binding in union all congenial spirits however scattered abroad? Is it not suited to be their organ of communication with those like minded elsewhere? Will it not increase their zeal, by kindling mutual emulation and by so dividing labors that each man shall have an office in keeping with his taste and opportunities. What better expedient can be devised to keep historical inquiries before the people, as well as to secure the co-operation and contributions of their thousand hands?

Is it not a nucleus, a reservoir into which rivulets without number, invaluable for its purposes though valueless as to all others, will naturally flow?

Is it not a company for mutual insurance—not against fire—but against a loss which can never, by any possibility, be repaired?

An association, of such a nature and of such aims, should commend itself to us all.

Statesmen! Among your motives to scorn delights and live laborious days is the hope to leave a name that men shall not willingly let die—can you be indifferent to what concerns the memory of your predecessors? Do to them as ye would that posterity should do to you.

Politicians! Will you not welcome our Society, as a little sanctuary where no war-whoop of party can be heard,—where the interests of all parties are one. If you look to dollars and cents, are researches to be sneered at, which by the papers of a single family have obtained nine pensions, and which may yet substantiate our claim to millions from the national treasury?

Scholars! Can you remember that Massachusetts has published scores of volumes to illustrate her history,—that Connecticut, New-Hampshire, New York, and even Georgia have followed in her footsteps, and blush not that we are behind them all?

Ye that have spoken of plants even unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall—that have chronicled every creeping thing that creepeth upon the face of the earth—can you pass by on the other side any memorial of the leaves in our history, as if tithing cummin were the weightiest of matters?

Rich men! The British Museum has last year appropriated more than \$20,000 to purchase books relating to America. Many of the rarest works on our local annals are led into captivity to London—materials, says one, for future Alison's to forge lies from. Will you only tighten your purse strings while men in deep poverty are struggling to secure for ourselves the documents which may be indispensable for refuting the half-truths, equivalent to whole falsehoods, which will be propounded, regarding our annals, by the party, or prejudiced writers of England?

Let us leave our history to be written by foreigners and it will be the play of Hamlet with the part of Hamlet omitted. The New York account of the taking of Ticonderoga is that "it was surprised by a detachment of provincials from Connecticut and Massachusetts Bay," as if there had no Vermonter raised a finger. The truth is, as we

have seen, that the first measures for that capture originated in Vermont, and that all but one sixth of those engaged in it were Vermonters.

Our ancestors made themselves of no reputation for you who had done nothing for them. No debt can be more binding on you than to see to it that justice is done their memory.

Is there no hope of any further aid from the State? Shall not this State, like so many others, perfect its archives, or shall the only State that redeemed its revolutionary paper money at par neglect to finish securing even its own laws and journals, and the records of its courts?

It is not fitting for the State's money to be laid out to help a man travel in England; but it is a shame to us that we have not sooner secured the services of a gentleman who had gained access to the correspondence during the most critical period of our history,—documents which others had in vain begged leave to examine—and who would have copied it cheaper and better than any other man. We have refused him hundreds though we might thus have procured a better reputation than we can now make of an aspersion which has been cast on the fame of our fathers. England is now lavishing thousands upon the same man for his assistance in obtaining documents in which she can feel comparatively but little interest.

Even Georgia has procured the copying of twenty folios regarding her history in British public offices.

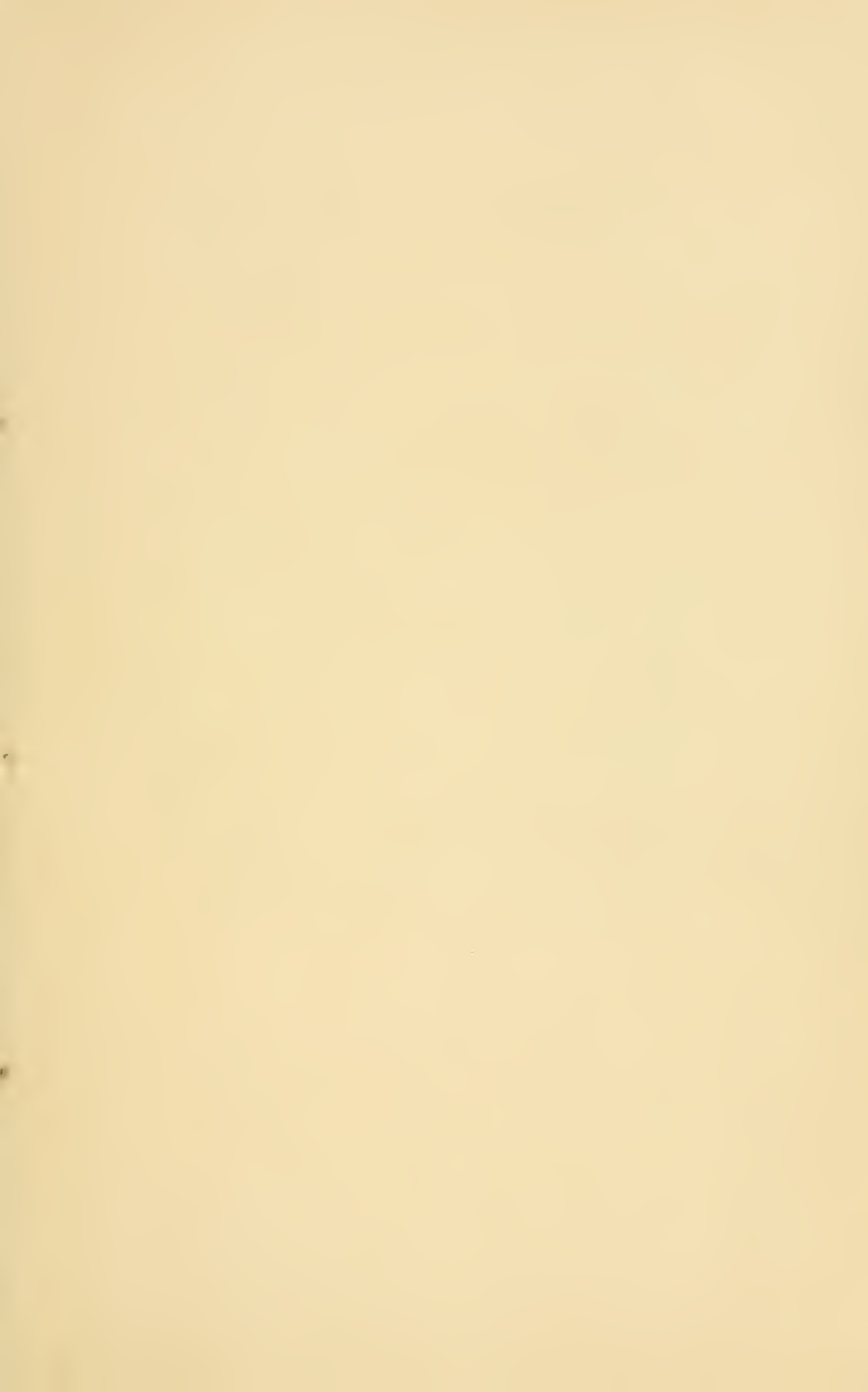
The genius of our history says to us, all and each, that thou doest do quickly, like the sybil to the ancient king, she year by year brings with her fewer and fewer antique records, but unlike the sybil demands for them an even increasing price.

I trust our Geological scrutiny will meet with no interruption or delay, but were we to leave that scrutiny half unfinished, another generation may renew it, and suffer no evil from our neglect. Geological records are always with us, everlasting as the hills,—they are graven on the rock forever, we may read them when we will.

The records of our fathers have in part perished with them,—some of them live in the memories of patriarchs who still stand among us with eyes undimmed and natural force not abated, as if on purpose that such as hold the pen of the ready writer may still embalm their sayings. For this end let each of us build over against his own house and rely on himself as though he were the only laborer. Let us redeem

the time, since if our old men pass away unquestioned, no buried Pompeii can be raised from the grave to enlighten our wilful ignorance. How we lack what we have lost irretrievably! Many of you have stood in the Massachusetts Senate Chamber and seen suspended over the entrance, a gun, drum, sword and cap, trophies, not of Lexington, Concord, or Bunker Hill, but of Bennington. What would we not give to regain the similar relic,—"those bruised arms hung up for monuments," which we throw away as nothing worth. It is too late.

But let us be up and doing, each in his own order. Every fact hitherto undetected, we can glean and garner up by means of the art preservative of all arts, may be a monument more lasting than those trophies in Boston, or than any corruptible things, and what is more, vocal with speech that may be heard through all space and through all time.





HENRY STEVENS  
First President of the Vermont Historical Society

## ACT OF INCORPORATION OF THE SOCIETY.

It is hereby enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont as follows :

1st. Henry Stevens, of Barnet, in the County of Caledonia, and Oramel H. Smith, Daniel P. Thompson, and George B. Mansur, of Montpelier, in the County of Washington,—and such other persons as have associated, and may hereafter associate, themselves with them, for the purpose of collecting and preserving materials for the civil and natural history of the State of Vermont,—are hereby made a body corporate and politic, by the name of *The Vermont Historical and Antiquarian Society* ; and, by that name, they, and their successors, may sue and be sued, and shall be capable in law to take and hold in fee simple, or otherwise, lands, and tenements, and rents and hereditaments, not exceeding, in the whole, the yearly value of \$2000.00, exclusive of the building or buildings, which may be actually occupied for the purposes of the said Corporation ; and they shall also be capable, in law, to take, receive and hold, personal estate to an amount, the yearly value of which shall not exceed the sum of \$2000.00, exclusive of the Books, Papers, Memorials, and other articles, composing the Library and Cabinet of the said Corporation ; and shall also have power to sell, demise, exchange, or otherwise dispose of, all, or part, of their lands, tenements, hereditaments, and other property, for the benefit of said Corporation ; and shall also have a Common Seal, which they may alter at their pleasure ; and shall also have the power to make By-Laws, with suitable penalties, not repugnant to the Laws of this State.

2d. The said Corporation shall have power, from time to time, as they may think fit, to elect a President, and such other officers as they shall judge necessary ; and at their first meeting, they shall agree upon the manner of calling future meetings, and proceed to execute all, or any, of the powers vested in them by this act.

3d. The Library and Cabinet of the said Corporation shall be kept in the town of Barnet, in the County of Caledonia.

4th. The said Henry Stevens is authorized to notify the first meeting of the said Corporation, by an advertisement thereof, under his hand, for three weeks before such meeting, in any newspaper printed in this State.

Approved Nov. 5, 1838.

FIRST MEETING OF THE  
**Vermont Historical and Antiquarian Society,**  
 OCTOBER, 1840.

Pursuant to an Act of the Legislature of Vermont, incorporating *The Vermont Historical and Antiquarian Society*, and empowering Henry Stevens to call the first meeting of said Society, the said Stevens having given the notice by said Act required, the several persons, in said Act incorporated, met at Montpelier on the third Thursday of October, A. D. 1840, and elected—

HENRY STEVENS, of Barnet, President.  
 The same, " Librarian.  
 D. P. Thompson, } Secretaries.  
 Geo. B. Mansur, }

As officers of the said Society for the year ensuing; and Silas H. Jennison, E. A. Stansbury, I. F. Redfield, D. M. Camp, E. P. Walton, Daniel Baldwin, G. W. Benedict, Solo. Stodard, and Norman Williams, associate members; and adopted the following

### CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS.

Article 1. There shall be a President and two Vice Presidents. It shall be the duty of the President, and, in his absence, one of the Vice Presidents, to preside in the meetings, and to regulate the debates of the Society and Council; to call meetings of the Council, and extraordinary meetings of the Society, by advice of Council. The President, or presiding officer, shall vote in Council, and also have a casting vote. The Vice Presidents shall, ex-officio, be members of the Council.

Art. 2. There shall be seven Counsellors, exclusive of the President and Vice Presidents: any four of the whole number shall constitute a quorum. It shall be the duty of the Counsellors to direct the Corresponding Secretaries in the performance of their duty; to present to the Society, for their acceptance, such regulations and by-laws as, from time to time, shall be thought expedient; to receive donations, and, with the President, to purchase, sell or lease, for the benefit of the Society, real or personal estate; to draw orders on the Treasury for



necessary monies, and, in general, to manage the prudential concerns of the Society. It shall be the duty of the Council to inquire concerning the characters of persons, living out of this State, proper to be elected Honorary Members.

Art. 3. There shall be one Recording Secretary, and two Corresponding Secretaries. The Recording Secretary shall be the keeper of the Seal of the Society. It shall be his duty to attend all meetings of the Society and Council, and to make and keep records of all their proceedings; and shall keep on file all literary papers belonging to the Society, under direction of the Council.

It shall be the duty of the Corresponding Secretaries to receive and read all communications made to the Society, and to manage, under the direction of the Council, all the correspondence of the Society.

Art. 4. There shall be a Treasurer who shall give such security as the President and Council shall require for the faithful performance of his trust. It shall be his duty to receive and keep all monies and evidence of property belonging to the Society; to pay out to the order of the President and Council; to keep a record of his receipts and payments; exhibit the same to, and settle with, a committee which shall be annually appointed for this purpose; and he shall put the money of said Society to interest under the direction of the President and Council.

Art. 5. There shall be a Librarian and Cabinet Keeper, who shall give bonds to the satisfaction of the President and Council for the faithful performance of his trust. He shall receive and have in his custody all Books, Papers, Productions of Nature, and Works of Art—the property of the Society. These he shall arrange in classes, and register in a book with a proper description of each article, with the donor's name, when the same shall be a present. No article shall *ever*, on any occasion, be loaned or taken from the *Museum*; nor shall any book or other article be borrowed from the Library, except by a vote of the Council, and then the loan of such article shall be recorded, and a receipt given therefor by the borrower, engaging to return the same in four weeks, or pay a forfeiture, such as by a vote of the Council shall be affixed.

Art. 6. The stated meetings of the Society shall be—one in Barnet, on the 17th day of January, and, when the same shall fall on Sunday,

then the Tuesday following; one in Montpelier on the third Thursday in October, at such hours and places as shall be notified by the Secretary. At the annual meeting in Montpelier, in October, there shall be chosen, by ballot, all the officers of the Society to serve during the following year, and until others are chosen. At this meeting a public oration shall be delivered by some person to be appointed by the Council.

Art. 7. All nominations for members shall hereafter be submitted to a committee of three for their approbation; and, if approved by said committee, the names of the candidates, with the names of the members who proposed said candidates, shall be entered in the book of nominations, and the candidates may be balloted for at the next meeting of the Society.

Art. 8. Each member shall annually pay into the hands of the Treasurer at the meeting, in October, \$2,00 towards a fund. And every person who shall neglect to pay said annual tax, and shall suffer him or herself to be in arrear for three annual taxes, after having been called on by the Treasurer in person, or by written order, shall be considered as having abdicated his interest in the Society, and no longer a member.

Art. 9. All meetings, standing or special, shall be notified by the Recording Secretary, under direction of the President and Council, in one newspaper, published in Montpelier, fourteen days previous to the day of the meeting, in which notification the hour and place of the meeting shall be designated.

Art. 10. In case of the death, resignation, or removal out of the State, of either of the Secretaries, or the Treasurer, or Librarian, the Council shall take charge of the official books, papers and effects belonging to the vacated office, giving receipts for the same, which books they may deliver to some person whom they may appoint to fill the office until the next meeting of the Society, when there shall be a choice.

Art. 11. This Constitution shall not be altered, or amended, except at the stated meeting in October, and then only by the vote of three-fourths of the members present.

## BY-LAWS.

1st. The ballots for the election of officers, and the admission of members, shall be collected by a committee chosen by nomination, who shall assort and count the votes and make report to the presiding officer; and he shall declare the result to the Society.

2d. Every member, who shall advance \$20 to the funds shall be excused paying the annual tax of \$2.

3d. Every new member shall be notified of his election by a printed letter signed by the Recording Secretary.

4th. The Secretary shall record, in a book for this purpose, the names of the members, and the times of their admission.

5th. All books and other articles, belonging to the Society, shall be appraised, and the price of each article shall be mentioned in the catalogue.

6th. A correct catalogue of the books, and other articles, shall be made out by the Librarian and Cabinet Keeper, or by a Committee chosen by the Society for this purpose, which copy shall be kept by the President for the time being; and, as additions are made to the Library and Museum, they shall be entered on the Catalogue and copy thereof.

7th. Every deed, to which the Common Seal of the Society is affixed, shall be passed and sealed in Council, signed by the President, and attested by the Secretary.

8th. There shall be a temporary place of deposit in Montpelier, and in such other places as the Council shall hereafter direct, for the convenience of those who may be disposed to present to the Society any article for its Library and Museum. Every article so deposited, shall, as soon after as circumstances will permit, be forwarded to the Library and Museum in Barnet.

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 SEVENTH ANNUAL MEETING.

On the third Thursday of October, A. D. 1846, the Vermont Historical and Antiquarian Society, agreeably to previous notice, held their seventh annual meeting at the Court House, in Montpelier; when the meeting was called to order by the President, and the following

Officers of the Society were duly elected for the year ensuing, viz.:

HENRY STEVENS, President.

I. F. Redfield, }  
S. B. Colby, } Vice do.

D. P. THOMPSON, Recording Secretary.

HENRY STEVENS, Librarian and Cabinet Keeper.

D. BALDWIN, Treasurer.

E. P. WALTON, }  
S. H. JENNISON, }  
I. F. REDFIELD, } Counsellors.  
D. M. CAMP, }  
D. BALDWIN, }

After which the Society adjourned to meet at the Brick Church, Oct. 16, to hear an Address from Rev. J. D. Butler.

D. P. THOMPSON, Secretary.

October 16, 1846.

Society met, and, the Legislature adjourning for the purpose, the members thereof assembled at the Brick Church, at 3 o'clock, P. M., when, the President and Secretary in the chair, Rev. J. D. Butler delivered an interesting address, illustrating the importance of preserving the fragmentary and unpublished history of Vermont; at the close of which Rev. J. Gridley offered a resolution of thanks to Mr. Butler for his address—requesting a copy for the press—which was adopted; and the meeting adjourned.

The following declaration and accompanying papers were found by Mr. Stevens, at Washington among a mass of rubbish and were first published in the Burlington Free Press, the editor of which paper very justly remarks that the State is under great obligation to Mr. Stevens for his services in hunting up and arranging official papers and other testimony touching the origin, progress, and final consummation of the struggle, which resulted in giving to the American Switzerland the proud individuality of which we so justly boast. We hope to see the State do justice to itself, and to Mr. Stevens, by purchasing these papers, and putting them in a shape to make them available to the community at large. When this is done, the world will be satisfied that the early settlers of Vermont were men of no common mould. For a mere handful of men to resist the combined efforts of New York on

the one side, and New Hampshire on the other—to be repulsed, if not rejected by the home government, and menaced by a foreign foe, involved the exercise of no common sagacity, and an amount of nerve and energy, with which we are not familiar. But so it was. While maintaining an open war with the neighboring states, they protected the whole line of our frontier, by keeping on terms with the common enemy, *while at the same time they rendered more efficient aid to the government which discarded them than either of the States alluded to.* The official correspondence with Washington—some of which is among these interesting papers—goes to demonstrate this, beyond a doubt.

It is due the honor of the State that something be done to sustain Mr. Stevens in his untiring efforts to bring to light the records of a State whose early history is more remarkable than that of any other State of the Union.

C. G. E.

## Vermont Declaration of Independence.

" In Convention of the Representatives from the several counties and towns of the New Hampshire grants, holden at Westminster, January 15, 1777, by adjournment.

*Whereas*, the Honorable the Continental Congress did, on the 4th day of July last, declare the United Colonies in America to be free and independent of the crown of Great Britain; which declaration we most cordially acquiesc in. And whereas by the said declaration, the arbitrary acts of the crown are null and void, in America. Consequently, the jurisdiction by said crown granted to New York government over the people of the New Hampshire grants is totally dissolved.

*We therefore*, the inhabitants, on said tract of land, are at present without law or government, and may be truly said to be in a state of nature; consequently a right remains to the people on said Grants, to form a Government best suited to secure their property well being and happiness. We the delegates from the several counties and towns on said tract of land, bounded as follows: South on the north line of Massachusetts Bay; East, on Connecticut River; North on Canada line; West as far as the New Hampshire Grants extends: After several adjournments for the purpose of forming ourselves into a distinct

separate State, being assembled at Westminster, do make and publish the following Declaration, viz :

" That we will at all times hereafter, consider ourselves as a free and independent State, capable of regulating our internal police, in all and every respect whatsoever. And that the people of said Grants have the sole and exclusive, and inherent right of ruling and governing themselves, in such manner and form as in their own wisdom shall think proper, not inconsistent or repugnant to any resolve of the Honorable Continental Congress.

*Furthermore*, we declare by all the ties which are held sacred among men, that we will firmly stand by and support one another in this our declaration of a State, and endeavoring as much as in us lies to suppress unlawful routs and disturbances whatever. Also we will endeavor to secure to every individual his life, peace and property, against all unlawful invaders of the same.

*Lastly*, we hereby declare, that we are at all times ready, in conjunction with our brethren in the United States of America, to do our full proportion in maintaining and supporting the just war, against the tyrannical invasions of the ministerial fleets and armies, as well as any other foreign enemies, sent with express purpose to murder our fellow brethren, and with fire and sword to ravage our defenceless country.

The said State hereafter to be called by the name of New Connecticut."

Extracts from the minutes.

IRA ALLEN, *Clerk*.

In Convention of the Representatives from the several counties and towns in the New Hampshire Grants holden at Westminster, 15th January 1777, by adjournment, Voted unanimously,

That it is the ardent wish of this Convention that each town in the District would send a Delegate or Delegates, to the next sitting of this Convention, those towns that have not chose any Delegates to choose and send. This Convention is adjourned to the first day of June next, to be held at the Meeting House in Windsor, at nine o'clock in the morning.

Extracts from the minutes.

IRA ALLEN, *Clerk*.

\* \* Non-residents that have a desire to attend the above Convention, are hereby notified of the same, said Convention was formed to govern the Internal Police of said District, and if thought proper, to form said District into a State.

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STATE OF VERMONT, }  
 In General Convention, Windsor, June 4, 1777. }

*Whereas*, this Convention, did at their session in Westminster, the 15th day of January last, among other things, declare the district of land commonly called and known by the name of the New Hampshire Grants, to "be a free and independent State, capable of regulating their own internal police in all and every respect whatsoever, and that it should be known thereafter by the name of New Connecticut."

And whereas, by mere accident, or through mistake, the said declaration alone, was published in the Connecticut Courant, No. 634, dated March the 17th, 1777, without assigning the reasons which impelled the inhabitants to such separation.

And whereas, this Convention have been informed that a district of land lying on the Susquehanah River, has been heretofore and is now known by the name of New Connecticut, which was unknown to them until some time since the declaration at Westminster aforesaid; and that it would be inconvenient in many respects for two separate districts on this continent to bear the same name;

*Resolved*, therefore, unanimously, that the said district described in the preamble to the declaration at Westminster, aforesaid, shall ever hereafter be called and known by the name of Vermont.

And whereas, the whole body of members which compose this Convention, consisting of the following persons, viz: Captain Josiah Bowker, President; Nathan Clarke, Esq., Mr. Simeon Hatheway, Mr. John Burnam, jun., Jonas Fay, Secretary; Major Jeremiah Clark, Mr. Abel Olin, Captain Ebenezer Willoughby, Mr. Abel Benedict, Mr. Joseph Bradley, Mr. Ely Bronson, Mr. Martin Powell, Mr. Thomas Bull, Mr. Cephas Kent, Mr. Moses Robinson 2nd., Dr. Gains Smith, Captain William Fitch, Captain Jonathan Willard,

Mr. Caleb Smith, Capt. Zebediah Dewey, Mr. Jesse Churchill, Captain William Gage, Captain Ebenezer Allen, Benjamin Spencer, Esq., Mr. Whitefield Foster, Mr. Joseph Smith, Mr. Stephen Pince, Mr. John Southerland, Captain Jonathan Fassett, Captain Josiah Powers, Captain Jeremiah Powers, Mr. Gamaliel Painter, Captain Heman Allen, Captain Ira Allen, Colonel Thomas Chittenden, Mr. William Miller, Dr. William Hall, Col. Benjamin Carpenter, Captain John Barnet, Mr. Israel Smith, Mr. John Dyer, Mr. Dennis Locklin, Nathaniel Robinson, Esq., Mr. Joshua Webb, Dr. Reuben Jones, Mr. Jabez Seargeants, Captain John Coffin, Captain William Udly, Mr. Ebenezer Hoisington, Captain William Curtiss, Major Joel Mathews, Captain William Gallop, Mr. Benjamin Emmons, Mr. Stephen Tilden, Col. Joseph Marsh, Mr. John Troop, John W. Dana, Esq., Mr. Asa Whitcomb, Mr. Asa Chandler, Col. Peter Alcott, Major Thomas Murdock, Mr. Jacob Burton, Joel Marsh, Esq., Mr. Daniel Gilbert, Mr. Abner Chamberlain, Mr. Frederick Smith, Mr. Amos Woodworth, Mr. Amabiah Woodworth, Dr. Bidad Andress, Mr. Benjamin Baldwin, Mr. John G. D. Bailey, Captain Robert Johnston,—amounting to seventy-two in number, being all convened at the town house in Windsor, aforesaid, and the motion being made and seconded, whether the house would proceed to business on the former declaration made at Westminster, in January, aforesaid, with this alteration only, that instead of New Connecticut, the said district should ever be known by the name of Vermont? That then the name of the representatives being distinctly and severally called by the Secretary, seventy-one of them did answer in the following, viz, " proceed to form ; " at which time and place the said seventy-one members did renew their pledges to each other by all the ties held sacred among men, and resolve and declare that they were at all times ready in conjunction with their brethren in the United States, to contribute their full proportion towards maintaining the present just war against the fleets and armies of Great Britain.

That the public may be capable of forming a just idea of the reasons which so necessarily obliged the inhabitants of the district before described, to declare themselves to be separate and distinct from the State of New York, the following complaints are hereto subjoined.



## COMPLAINTS.

In the year 1764, the Legislative authority of New York did obtain jurisdiction over the before described territory of land, by virtue of a false representation made by the late Lieut. Governor Colden, that for the convenience of trade and administration of justice the inhabitants were desirous of being annexed to that Government.

They have refused to make re-grants of the same lands to the original proprietors and occupants, unless at the exorbitant rate of \$2300 fees for each township, and did enhance the quit rent three fold, and demanded an immediate delivery of the title derived before from New Hampshire.

The Judges of their Supreme Court have made a solemn declaration, that the charters, conveyances, &c., of the lands included in the before described premises, were utterly null and void, on which said title was founded.

In consequence of which declaration, writs of possession have by them issued, and the Sheriff of the County of Albany sent at the head of six or seven hundred armed men to enforce the execution thereof.

They have passed an act annexing a penalty thereto, of thirty pounds, five and six months imprisonment, on any person, who should refuse attending the sheriff after being requested for the purpose of executing writs of possession.

The Governors, Dunmore, Tyron and Colden, have made re-grants to several tracts of land included in the premises, to certain favorite land-jobbers in the Government of New York, in direct relation of his Britanic Majesty's special orders in the year 1767.

They have endeavored and many times threatened to excite the King's troops to destroy us.

They have issued proclamations wherein they have offered large sums of money for the purpose of apprehending those persons who have dared boldly and publicly to appear in defence of their just rights.

They did pass twelve acts of outlawry on the 9th of March, A. D. 1774, empowering the respective Judges of their Supreme Court, to award execution of death against those inhabitants in said district, that they should judge to be offenders, without trial.

They have and still continue an unjust claim to those lands, which greatly retards emigration into, and the settlement of this State.

They have hired foreign troops, emigrants from Scotland, at different times, and armed them to drive us out of possession.

They have sent the savages on our frontiers to destroy us.

They have proceeded to erect the counties of Cumberland and Gloucester, and established courts of justice there, after they were discountenanced by the authority of Great Britain.

The Free Convention of the State of New York, at Harlem, in the year 1776, unanimously voted, "that all quit-rents formerly due to the King of Great Britain, are now due and owing to this Convention, or such future government as shall be established in this State."

To give truth its due limits, they, the late government of New York, have spared neither cost or pains, nor been wanting in using every artful insinuation within the compass of their power; (however unwarrantable by the laws of God or man,) to defraud those inhabitants out of the whole of their landed property; and nothing but consciences void of offence towards God and man, to whose impartial judgment we appeal, could have induced those inhabitants to have run the risk, and to have undergone the hardships and fatigues they have borne, for the salvation of their lives, liberties and properties.

In the several stages of the aforesaid oppression, we have petitioned his Britannic Majesty in the most humble manner for redress, and have at a very great expense, received several reports in our favor: and in other instances wherein we have petitioned the late Legislative authority of New York, these petitions have been treated with neglect. We shall therefore only remind the public that our local situation alone, is a sufficient reason of our declaration of an independency, and must therefore denounce a separation from the State of New York, and refer the public to our declaration of being a distinct State, published in the Connecticut Courant the 15th day of January last, and sincerely wish, that in future a lasting and permanent peace may continue between the State of New York and this with the other United States of America.

By order of Convention,  
JONAS FAY, *Secretary.*

## “The Song of the Vermonters,” 1779.\*

Ho—all to the borders! Vermonters, come down,  
 With your breeches of deer-skin, and jackets of brown;  
 With your red woolen caps, and your moccasins, come  
 To the gathering summons of trumpet and drum.

Come down with your rifles! let gray wolf and fox  
 Howl on in the shade of their primitive rocks;  
 Let the bear feed securely from pig-pen and stall;  
 Here's a two-legged game for your powder and ball.

On our South come the Dutchman, enveloped in grease;  
 And, arming for battle, while canting of peace;

\* The political history of Vermont is full of interest. In 1762, New York, by reason of an extraordinary grant of Charles II. to the Duke of York, claimed a jurisdiction over about sixty townships of which grants had been given by the Governor of New Hampshire, declaring those grants illegal. An attempt was made to dispossess the settlers, but it was promptly resisted. In 1774, New York passed a most despotic law against the resisting Vermonters, and the Governor offered a large reward for the apprehension of the celebrated *Ethan Allen*, and seven of his associates. The prescribed persons in turn threatened to “*kill and destroy* any person or persons whomsoever that should be accessory, aiding or assisting in taking any of them.” See *Allen's Vindication*, p. 45. Blood was shed at Westminster Court House, in 1775. *Vide. R. Jones' Narrative*. In 1777 Vermont declared its independence. New York still urged her claims and attempted to enforce them with her militia. In 1779, New Hampshire also laid claim to the whole State of Vermont, Massachusetts speedily followed by putting in *her* claims to about two-thirds of it. Congress, powerless under the old Confederation, endeavored to keep on good terms with all the parties, but ardently favored New York. Vermont remonstrated warmly. Congress threatened. Vermont published “an appeal to the candid and impartial world”—denounced Congress, and asserted its own absolute independence. Notwithstanding the threats offered on all sides, the contest terminated without much bloodshed, and Vermont was admitted into the Union in 1791, after existing as an independent sovereignty for nearly fifteen years.—*Williams' History of Vermont. &c.*

On our East, Crafty Meshech† has gathered his band,  
To hang up our leaders, and eat out our land.

Ho—all to the rescue! For Satan shall work  
No gain for his legions of Hampshire and York!  
They claim our possessions,—the pitiful knaves—  
The tribute *we* pay, shall be prisons and graves!

Let Clinton and Ten Broek,‡ with bribes in their hands,  
Still seek to divide us, and parcel our lands;—  
We've coats for our traitors, whoever they are;  
The warp is of *feathers*—the filling of *tar*! §

Does the "old bay state" threaten? Does Congress complain?  
Swarms Hampshire in arms on our borders again?  
Bark the war-dogs of Britain aloud on the lake?  
Let 'em come;—what they *can*, they are welcome to take.

What seek they among us? The pride of our wealth  
Is comfort, contentment, and labor and health,  
And lands which, as Freemen, we only have trod,  
Independent of all save the mercies of God.

Yet we owe no allegiance; we bow to no throne;  
Our ruler is law, and the law is our own;  
Our leaders themselves are our own fellowmen,  
Who can handle the sword, or the scythe, or the pen.

Our wives are all true, and our daughters are fair,  
With their blue eyes of smiles, and their light flowing hair;

† Hon. Meshech Weare, Governor of New Hampshire.

‡ Gov. Clinton of New York, and Hon. A. Ten Broek, President  
of the New York Convention,

§ The New York sheriffs and those who submitted to the authority  
of New York were often roughly handled by the Green Mountain  
Boys. The following is from the journal of the proceedings of the  
Vermont Council of public safety: *Council of Safety, 3d Sept. 1777.*

" ——— is permitted to return home, and remain on his  
father's farm ( and if found off to expect thirty-nine lashes of the *beach  
seal* ) until further orders from this Council. " The instrument of pun-  
ishment was termed the " *beach seal* , " in allusion to the great seal  
of New Hampshire affixed to the grants, of which the beach rod  
well laid upon the naked backs of the " Yorkers " and their adherents  
was considered a confirmation.

All brisk at their wheels till the dark even-fall,  
Then blithe at the sleigh-ride, the husking, and ball !

We've sheep on the hillsides ; we've cows on the plain ;  
And gay-tasseled corn-fields, and rank growing grain ;  
There are deer on the mountains ; and wood-pigeons fly  
From the crack of our muskets, like clouds on the sky.

And there's fish in our streamlets and rivers, which take  
Their course from the hills to our broad-bosomed lake ;  
Through rock-arched Winooski the salmon leaps free,  
And the portly shad follows all fresh from the sea.

Like a sun-beam the pickerel glides through his pool ;  
And the spotted trout sleeps where the water is cool,  
Or darts from his shelter of rock and of root  
At the beaver's quick plunge, or the angler's pursuit.

And ours are the mountains, which awfully rise  
Till they rest their green heads on the blue of the skies ;  
And ours are the forests unwasted, unshorn,  
Save where the wild path of the tempest is torn.

And though savage and wild be this climate of ours,  
And brief be our seasons of fruits and of flowers,  
Far dearer the blast round our mountains which raves,  
Than the sweet summer zephyr which breathes over slaves.

Hurra for Vermont ! for the land which we till  
Must have sons to defend her from valley and hill ;  
Leave the harvest to rot on the field where it grows,  
And the reaping of wheat for the reaping of foes.

Far from Michiscoui's wild valley, to where  
Poosoomsuck steals down from his wood-circled lair,  
From Shocticook river to Lutterlock town,—  
Ho—all to the rescue ! Vermonters, come down !

Come York or come Hampshire,—come traitors and knaves ;  
If ye rule o'er our *land*, ye shall rule o'er our *graves* ;  
Our vow is recorded—our banner unfurled ;  
In the name of Vermont we defy *all the world* ! ||

|| " Rather than fail, I will retire with my hardy Green Mountain Boys to the desolate caverns of the mountains, *and wage war with human nature at large.*"—*Ethan Allen's Letter to Congress, March 9, 1784.*





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